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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EU](#) [SW](#)  
SUBJECT: SWEDISH MFA ON JANUARY GAERC

REF: SECSTATE 4297

Classified By: CDA Robert Silverman for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

(C) Poloff delivered reftel demarche January 21 to Magnus Scholdtz, EU Correspondent at the MFA. Scholdtz said the agenda for the January 26 GAERC was not entirely fixed, but made the following substantive comments:

-- Guantanamo Detainees: Guantanamo detainees will be discussed under the agenda item "all other business" during lunch on January 26. "The EU is looking for a common position on this," he added. While hesitant to discuss Sweden's position, he stated that "it is quite clear based on our lack of objection, that there exists a political will to be able to come back to the U.S. in a constructive way" on the issue. He added that Swedish national legislation will "regulate" Sweden's response on this "political issue."

-- Afghanistan: Scholdtz confirmed that Afghanistan is not on the agenda, saying "it's a pity, the agenda was not so crowded." He added that Sweden is working hard within the EU for a positive response to Afghan Interior Minister Atmar's request for greater support for EUPOL, but noted that recruitment of police trainers remains a very difficult challenge. (Henrik Landerholm of the Folke Bernadotte Academy, a Swedish government agency working on crisis management issues for the MFA and Ministry of Defense, told us in a recent meeting that he has been charged with recruiting civilian advisers, including police, for Afghanistan, but that he is finding it very hard to attract talented officers.)

-- Russia-Ukraine Gas Dispute: Sweden has virtually no dependence on Russian gas or oil and so is less active than others in internal EU discussions, Scholdtz noted. He said Sweden shares the view that the issue of diversification has not been dealt with by the EU and the "lessons of 2006" have not led to action. "Russia is trying to build dependency by others in the EU," he added. However, Sweden sees growing difficulties in Russia's ability to continue to be a reliable energy supplier, or to increase its supply through new pipelines such as Nord Stream, given the declining infrastructure of Russian fields.

-- Gaza: Scholdtz stated that the Czechs are having a hard time "holding the EU position together," but that there was willingness within the EU to contribute to "safeguarding" the borders, including maritime. "The EU is ready to engage but is not interested in being fully responsible," he concluded.

SILVERMAN